

CLAIMS:

1. A method of displaying a pre-selection indicator for a widget displayed by a graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:

5 determining a field of influence extending beyond the visual display area of the widget;

determining whether a displayed selection pointer is within the field of influence of the widget; and

10 if so, displaying the pre-selection indicator for the widget.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the pre-selection indicator includes a visual aura associated with the displayed widget.

15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying the pre-selection indicator includes:

visually scaling the displayed widget to a boundary surrounding the widget, the boundary being defined by the field of influence.

20 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining the field of influence includes:

calculating a boundary value $B = \sqrt{m/M}$ for defining the field of influence, wherein m represents a mass value associated with the widget and M represents a mass value associated with the displayed selection pointer.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the step of determining whether the displayed selection pointer is within the field of influence includes:

- determining a distance D between the center of the displayed selection pointer and the center of the widget; and
- determining whether the boundary value B is greater than greater than or equal to the distance D.

6. A method of generating a pre-selection indicator for a widget displayed by a graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:

determining the distance D between the center of a displayed selection pointer having a mass value M and the center of the widget having a mass value m;

calculating the value $B = \sqrt{m/M}$;

determining whether the value of B is greater than or equal to D;
and

if so, generating the pre-selection indicator for the widget.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the pre-selection indicator includes a visual aura associated with the displayed widget.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the step of generating the pre-selection indicator includes:

visually scaling the displayed widget to a boundary surrounding the widget, the boundary being defined by the value B.

9. A computer-usable medium storing a computer program product for generating a pre-selection indicator for a widget displayed by a graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:

10 means for determining a field of influence extending beyond the visual display area of the widget;

means for determining whether a displayed selection pointer is within the field of influence of the widget; and

15 means for generating the pre-selection indicator for the widget when the displayed selection pointer is within the field of influence.

10. The computer-usable medium of claim 9, further comprising:

means for generating the pre-selection indicator to include a visual aura associated with the displayed widget.

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11. The computer-usable medium of claim 9, wherein the means for generating the pre-selection indicator includes:

means for visually scaling the displayed widget to a boundary surrounding the widget, the boundary being defined by the field of influence.

12. The computer-usable medium of claim 9, wherein the means for determining the field of influence includes:

means for calculating a boundary value $B = \sqrt{m/M}$ for defining the field of influence, wherein m represents a mass value associated with the widget and M represents a mass value associated with the displayed selection pointer.

13. The computer-usable medium of claim 12, wherein the means for determining whether the displayed selection pointer is within the field of influence includes:

means for determining a distance D between the center of the displayed selection pointer and the center of the widget; and

means for determining whether the boundary value B is greater than greater than or equal to the distance D.

14. A computer system, comprising:

a display;

a graphical user interface (GUI) presented by the display;

a widget, included in the GUI;

means for determining a field of influence extending beyond the visual display area of the widget;

means for determining whether a displayed selection pointer is within the field of influence of the widget; and

means for generating the pre-selection indicator for the widget when the displayed selection pointer is within the field of influence.

15. The computer system of claim 14, further comprising:
means for generating the pre-selection indicator to include a visual
aura associated with the displayed widget.

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16. The computer system of claim 14, wherein the means for
generating the pre-selection indicator includes:
means for visually scaling the displayed widget to a boundary
surrounding the widget, the boundary being defined by the field of influence.

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